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OTTERY ST. MARY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1948

F. N. SIDEBOTHAM
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF OTTERY SAINT MARY

To the Chairman and Members of the Ottery Saint Mary Urban District Council.

I beg to present to you a statement of the Public Health of your District for the year, 1948.

Vital Statistics.

Live Births	---	51.
Still Births	---	0.

Boys 28.
Girls 23.

The birth rate was the highest for many years.

There were THREE illegitimate births.

Deaths.

In our own district --- 37.

Transferable from other districts - 4.

Males 16.
Females 25.

This was the lowest death rate for many years.

Of these deaths:-

0 had reached the age of 90 years and upward.
10 had reached the age of 80 years and upward.
22 had reached the age of 70 years and upward.

There was one death of a child under one year.

There were SIX deaths from Cancer.
There was ONE death from Tuberculosis.
There was ONE accidental death and no case of suicide.

The average age of death was 64.5 years.

Hospital.

The following details have been given by the Secretary of the Ottery Saint Mary District Cottage Hospital, viz:-

Admissions	---	122.
Discharges	---	112.
Out Patients	---	194.
Out Patients Attendance		700.
Operations.	---	84.
Deaths.		4.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Infant Welfare Centre is open every week except during holiday periods. During this year it was open 49 times.

On the Register there were:- 71 Mothers; 52 Infants, and 27 Toddlers.

The attendances were as follows, viz:-

Mothers	-	870.
Infants	-	511.
Toddlers	-	446.

Once again these figures show a marked increase over those of last year.

Prevalence and Treatment of Infectious Diseases.

In the early part of the year there was a considerable epidemic of Measles - but the epidemic was not of a virulent type.

I received the following notifications of Infectious Diseases during the year, viz:-

Measles	27.
Tuberculosis (Surgical)	1.
Polio-Mvelitis	0.
Scarlet Fever	2.
Whooping Cough	4.
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	1.

From the period commencing the 1st. January 1948 until the 30th. June, 1948, the Council was responsible for arrangements of Diphtheria Immunisation and, during that period I am of the opinion that the Council continued to effect the immunisation of approximately 95% of the children of the District. Since the 1st. July, 1948, this service has been under the direct administration of the Devon County Council and no information is, as yet, available as to the number of children who were immunised during that period.

I have received no records of Venereal Diseases. The nearest centre for treatment is as Exeter, and presumably, any cases that occur in this district go to Exeter direct for treatment, and do not come under my notice.

Water Supply.

1. The supply to the town during 1948 has been satisfactory (a) as to quality, after chlorination, and (b) as to quantity - although on a number of occasions it was necessary to pump from the emergency well.

The average daily flow during the year was 90,225 gallons.

In the outlying districts the supplies are privately owned, except Public Pumps at the villages of Tipton St. John and Wiggaton which were satisfactory as to quality and quantity.

2. Samples were taken approximately every two months - every sample of water as going into the supply was found to be satisfactory.

Water Supply (continued).

3. The water is relatively hard and has no plumbo-solvent action.

4. No action was taken in respect of any form of contamination.

5. Periodical bacteriological examinations were made of the piped supply to the town, and the results obtained from the chlorinated water were quite satisfactory. The unchlorinated water showed evidence of organic pollution.

(The Chlorination plant is situated approximately 75 yards from the reservoirs, and the water is chlorinated at this point before entering the reservoirs).

6. No action has been taken during the year with regard to pollution at the source, but the Council are still endeavouring to give all possible support to the formation of an East Devon Water Board, which will give an alternative supply. Further consideration is also being given to proposals for an immediate supply to augment the present town water supplies and discussions on this matter are being continually held with the County Council.

7. The supply in the built-up area of the District is piped direct to 696 premises with an approximate population of 2,111, this being a little over 50% of the population according to the 1939 census.

Sewerage.

The sewage from the Town area gravitates to a small works where it is dealt with by TWO settling tanks and SIX contact beds. The outlying rural areas are dealt with by cesspits with, of course, the exception of the Alfington Housing Estate where a separate sewage filter system is installed. The district's arrangements are considered satisfactory and, during the year, no nuisances occurred.

Meat and Other Foods.

There have been no outbreaks of food poisoning during the year. Periodical inspections were carried out at Butchers' Premises, Slaughterhouses, Cafés; Hotel Kitchens; Bakehouses; Ice Cream Retailers Premises; Mobile Ice Cream Traders etc. Carcases inspected as Ante- and Post-Mortem inspections were NIL. (Slaughtering is done centrally at Exeter).

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant
(Signed). F. N. SIDEBOTHAM.
Medical Officer of Health.